**Lyrics, by Francis Scott Key:**

**First Verse**   
Oh, say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,   
What so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's last gleaming?   
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, thro' the perilous fight,   
O'er the ramparts we watch'd, were so gallantly streaming?   
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air   
Gave proof thro' the night that our flag was still there.   
Oh, say, does that Star-Spangled Banner yet wave   
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

**Second Verse**   
On the shore dimly seen, thro' the mists of the deep,   
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,   
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,   
As it fitfully blows half conceals, half discloses?   
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,   
In full glory reflected, now shines in the stream;   
'Tis the Star-Spangled Banner, Oh long may it wave   
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

**Third Verse**  
And where is that band who so vauntingly swore  
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion  
A home and a country should leave us no more?  
Their blood has wash'd out their foul footstep's pollution.  
No refuge could save the hireling and slave  
From the terror of flight or the gloom of the grave,  
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave  
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

**Fourth Verse**  
Oh, thus be it ever when free men shall stand   
Between their loved homes and the war's desolation!   
Blest with vict'ry and peace, may the heav'n rescued land   
Praise the Pow'r that hath made and preserved us a nation!   
Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,   
And this be our motto, "In God is our trust"   
And the Star-Spangled Banner in triumph shall wave   
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

## Biographical and Historical Note

Francis Scott Key (1780-1843), a native of Maryland, was a lawyer and poet. His patriotic poem, "The Star-Spangled Banner," which has become a national song, made him famous.

The incidents referred to in this poem occurred during the War of 1812. In August, 1814, a strong force of British entered Washington and burned the Capitol, the White House, and many other public buildings. On September 13, the British admiral moved his fleet into position to attack Fort McHenry, near Baltimore. The bombardment of the fort lasted all night, but the fort was so bravely defended that the flag was still floating over it when morning came.

Just before the bombardment began, Francis Scott Key was sent to the admiral's frigate to arrange for an exchange of prisoners, and was told to wait until the bombardment was over. All night he watched the fort, and by the first rays of morning light he saw he Stars and Stripes still waving. Then, in his joy and pride, he wrote the stirring words of the song which is now known and loved by all Americans--"The Star-Spangled Banner."

## Discussion

1. What lines in the poem are explained by the historical note above?
2. The poem expresses the love and reverence felt by patriots when the flag is endangered by the attacks of armed men in war. What is said on page 84 about the danger to our country in a time of peace? From what people? Can you do anything to prevent this danger?
3. Where was the reflection of the flag seen?
4. What land is the "heav'n-rescued land"?
5. What does the poet mean when he speaks of the "Power that hath made and preserved us a nation," ?
6. Find the words that must be our country's motto.
7. Do you think this national song cheered the American soldiers in the recent World War?
8. Find the meaning of: dawn; gleaming; host; discloses; beam; triumph.
9. Pronounce: haughty; vauntingly; pollution; hireling; desolation.

## Phrases for Study

proudly we hailed, fitfully blows, gallantly streaming, catches the gleam, Star-Spangled, full glory reflected, mists of the deep, havoc of war, dread silence reposes, foul footsteps' pollution.